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ABSTRACT

The transcript of a teleconference on the relations among rhetorical theory, communication theory, and research as it was presented to a speech communications class at Texas Tech University in 1971 is presented in this paper. Issues discussed in the transcript include whether intent is a useful defining characteristic of the term "communicaton"; the utility of attempting to distinguish among the types of questions that scholars can ask about human communications, and similarities between the definition of rhetoric and communication theory in the discipline of speech communication. Updated reactions to the conference are provided by two of the participants and a reaction is also provided by William J. Jordan. (MKM)

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THE RELATIONS AMONG COMMUNICATION THEORY, RHETORICAL THEORY AND RESEARCH: TRANSCRIPT OF A FIVE-WAY TELECONFERENCE WITH UPDATING RESPONSES.

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1976

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FOREWORD

On April 12, 1971, a five-way exchange of ideas among some leaders in rhetorical and communication theory took place by way of a long distance conference call. The evening program was the final session in a series of nine telelectures concerning the conceptual frontiers of speech communication sponsored by the Department of Speech and Theatre Arts of Texas Tech University. The topic, "The Relations Among Communication Theory, Rhetorical Theory and Research," was chosen as the best way to synthesize the segmental effect of the preceding eight lectures by individuals. The general aim of the telelecture series was to expose graduate students to scholars recognized for their work on the frontiers of knowledge in speech communication and theatre arts and to preserve on videotape the presentations for students of succeeding years. The project was funded by the Interim Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Lawrence L. Graves.

The telelecturer was brought to campus on videotape. After viewing the videotape, the student audience discussed the scholar's ideas with him via the teleconference equipment of the Bell System. The program series involved these scholars:

1. "Conceptual Frontiers in Speech Communication Research," Professor James E. Roever, Queens College/CUNY. Roever's lecture was subsequently published under the title, "Speech-Communication Research: Relevance$_1$, and Relevance$_2$", Central States Speech Journal, 23 (Summer, 1972), 109-117.

2. Conceptual Frontiers of Communication Theory (1970) Professor Frank E. X. Dance, University of Wisconsin, Wilwaukee.
3. Speech Communication as a Behavioral Science (1970), Professor Gerald R. Miller, Michigan State University.
4. Conceptual Frontiers of Speech Education for Black Folk (1970), Professor Jack L. Daniel, University of Pittsburgh.
5. Conceptual Frontiers of the Oral Performance of Literature (1971), Professor Don Geiger, University of California. Geiger's lecture was later published in Studies in Interpretation, ed. by Esther M. Doyle and Virginia Hastings Floyd (Amsterdam: Rodopi, N.V., 1972), under the chapter title, "Poetry as Awareness of What?"
6. Conceptual Frontiers of Rhetorical Criticism (1971), Professor Edwin Black, University of Wisconsin. Black's lecture became the substance of a paper delivered at the 1973 Speech Communication Association convention session featuring Black and Miller on humanistic and scientific approaches to communication inquiry.
7. Operant Conditioning and Treatment of Speech Disorders (1971), Professor Robert H. Brookshire, VA Hospital, Kansas City.
8. Conceptual Frontiers of Creativity in Theatre Arts (1971), Mr. Wallace Smith, Evanston Twp. High School.

The series of individual presentations whetted the appetite of the students for an interaction among scholars on basic issues. The topic was framed to embrace the broadest statement of the fundamental

problem and two of the series lecturers, Professors Dance and Miller, consented to join Professor Wayne Brockriede of the University of Colorado, and Professor Theodore Clevenger, Jr., of Florida State University.

Regardless of some minor problems in channel, this alternative to bringing the participants to the campus proved to be economical of time and money. However, specialists talking among themselves, using the mental currency of their special field, can become a difficult listening task. Add to that the factor of voices disembodied of the usual wealth of nonverbal contributors to understanding and there is yielded up a talking book with few of the advantages of the printed medium which essentially allows for a reflective pause betimes as suits the individual. Consequently, a transcript was made to facilitate use of the discussion in instruction. The basic issues treated in the following discussion have endured and become more crucial to the definition of our role as a field of inquiry.

Quite often in the course of the interaction, consensus-building comments were expressed. Such statements may indicate either a strong desire for intellectual cohesion among diverse types, or a phenomenon others have noted as characteristic of teleconferencing. Etzioni, Laudon and Lipson found in conference-call meetings that participants "felt less pressure to conform to group opinion than participants at face-to-face meetings. Yet, as in the laboratory experiment, greater individual freedom did not impede the formation of a final group consensus." (Journal of Communication, 25 [Spring, 1975], p. 71.) One participant tended to edit out consensus-related

comments when he was provided a transcript on which to reflect, and that behavior seemed to fit the phenomenon noted. Though the transcript could have been severely edited to omit the elements characteristic of speech communication and to make the product read as if it had been written instead of spoken, the editor decided to stay quite closely to the spoken dialogue as the kind of "talked book" described by Walter Org. ("The History and the Future of Verbal Media," in Human Communication: Theoretical Explorations [Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1974], p. 177.) "Electronic orality was aimed at the typewriter, blue pencil, and linotype. What we had in mind as we talked was not simply good talk but good printed matter. However, paradoxically, we wanted the final printing to sound as though the production were not printing at all but informal talk," he said, referring to a printed interview experience of his own. One product of our teleconference was some measure of cohesion; that product would tend to be cut out if the transcript were edited to read, rather than to sound, well.

After three years, the editor contacted the participants for an updated opinion regarding trends in the development of the issue in the field. Miller's response sums up a general view of the current feeling of most of the participants, and helps the reader to override to some extent the time-boundedness of speech on an April evening in 1971.

Wayne Brockriede could not contribute an up-dating-reaction for he was recovering from a serious illness that befell him since the original discussion. He said that he still generally subscribed to what he said.

April 12, 1971

FOUR-WAY, LONG-DISTANCE TELEPHONE CONFERENCE ON

THE RELATIONS AMONG RHETORICAL THEORY,

COMMUNICATION THEORY AND RESEARCH

Participating are: Dr. Gerald Miller, Michigan State University
Dr. Wayne Brockriede, University of Colorado
Dr. Theodore Clevenger, Florida State University
Dr. Frank Dance, University of Denver

Wayne Brockriede: I suppose I've been invited to represent rhetorical theory and Frank Dance communication theory, but I think that we need to check definitions. There are some ways of defining rhetorical theory narrowly enough so that it's different from communication theory. There are other ways of defining it, as I tend to do, that make it virtually synonymous. It seems to me that if you define it as a study of how interpersonal relationships and attitudes are influenced within the context of the communication situation, then I'm not sure how it differs from communication theory. It occurs to me that if any of the three of you see differences, we might want to pursue them to see whether they're really significant, and if not, we might get on with the job of pursuing some issues of theory building, some issues of research and maybe especially some issues of relating the two.

Frank Dance: I think Wayne has taken an interesting point of departure because in one of Gerry Miller's essays on defining communication in the Journal of Communication[1] as well as in his book Speech Communication[2], I read him as talking about the necessity for intent, for purposiveness in communication. Now personally, I don't think intent for purposiveness is essential to communication as I understand it, but I do see it as

essential to rhetoric; I don't know how Ted feels about it, but the point that Wayne raises ties in Brockriede, Dance, and Miller, I think, into a context right at the outset whether or not intent is essential to communication, or to rhetoric, or to both.

Clevenger: Gerry, are you going to respond to that out of the context of your essay?

Gerry Miller: I'll respond to it very briefly. At this point in time, I suspect that intent is a necessary part of the definition of "communication" only as it provides us with a more useful definition. I have discussed the concept of intent in order to limit somewhat the scope of the activities that the communication scholar regards as being central to his discipline. At the National Conference on Rhetoric, at Wingspread[3], we got embroiled in a very long (and I thought relatively useless) discussion about whether or not, when a person walking along on a golf course and happens to stub his toe on a rock, the rock has communicated with the individual in some way, since obviously the environment has impinged on the individual and caused him to respond in a certain way. I guess there's nothing magical in my notion of invoking the concept of intent, other than to say that I don't think disciplinarily we can be all things to all people, and it does help to provide a little more of a closed ball park in which to operate. I suspect that's my only reason for including it in the definition.

Ted Clevenger: It seems to me, that we have indeed found an interesting focus for discussion, and one that may make some differences, some truly diagnostic differences among our points of view. It seems to me that the question of intent, of whether intent is vital to the definition of one, or the other, or both of these terms, rests on whose intent

you are talking about. Now, if you are talking about the intent of the communication source, then it seems to me that that intent, intent on part of the source, is an essential ingredient of rhetorical theory. I don't see how you can have a meaningful rhetoric without intent on the part of the rhetor. On the other hand, it seems to me that you can have (and I may disagree with Gerry Miller here) a meaningful definition of communication theory if you settle for intent on the part of the receiver. It seems to me that, to a certain extent, one is engaged in a communication act when he is reading in the behavior of another human being, or perhaps even in the behavior of a machine, meanings which the other did not intend at least consciously to sense.

Frank Dance: I find myself in agreement with Ted Clevenger's observation here. I think Gerry is right in his effort to try to limit the field. I think that this is something that those of us who have become identified (certainly have Gerry and Ted) with communication and communication theory are often somewhat discomforted by the fact that it's hard to see any horizons within the expanse that we are trying to examine. So that I can understand Gerry Miller's intent in trying to ascribe the need for intent as an essential element. But I can't myself feel that it is essential to communication, but I agree with Ted that for me it is essential to rhetoric. I'd like to hear Wayne respond to that.

Wayne Brockriede: I would like to respond to that. I'm not sure that intent on the part of a source is any more necessary in rhetoric than communication (if there is in fact any differences between the two terms); that one could adopt a receiver-oriented point-of-view in regard to any

discourse that would ordinarily be called rhetorical. We have traditionally taken a source oriented point-of-view and centered a good deal of emphasis around the speaker and his preparation of messages, but I think that is simply an historical emphasis rather than any theoretical necessity, and, as a matter of fact, it occurs to me that we would be better off, very often, if we were to look at rhetorical discourse from a receiver orientation, and while a source may have an intent, it may be that that's not the most important point on which to key into any analysis of a rhetorical event.

Gerry Miller: I would like to ask Wayne Brockriede a question. We now have a division in the Speech Communication Association called Rhetorical and Communication Theory, yet you started off the discussion tonight, Wayne, by saying that for your purposes rhetorical theory and communication theory are probably close to being synonomous. I ask you, then, in the interest of having the most economical vocabulary possible and given the general value of parsimony, why should we have both terms in the light tonight?

Wayne Brockreide: Well, I'm not sure that we ought to. I think that there may be a political fact that makes it useful as a transitional label, just as I for one take the burgeoning use of the term speech communication as a transitional term. I think the term communication will eventuate as the label of our discipline. And I think eventually in the interest of parsimony communication theory may eventuate as the label for that division. I think that from a political point of view, however, that there may be some value in the redundant title that we are starting off with.

Frank Dance: One of the reactions I have to listening to Wayne, Gerry, Ted and my own thoughts on this, is that here is the kind of a question that may well serve as a focal point for some well designed research of whatever methodological bent because, although the four of us have reached what I guess is a kind of accord (some kind of accord on the question of intent), I think it's really a question which causes a great deal of cleavage in the field of speech communication. I think there are a lot of people who are rather adamant about defining intent into either communication or rhetoric, and that it can't be solved as a disciplinary question with the same equanimity as we seem to have solved it in our discourse this evening. What ways could we examine the question? How would one put together a research endeavor to discover the role of intent in communication or in rhetoric?

Gerry Miller: Off the top of my head, Frank, I can't respond too intellegently to this question, but one of the things one could do is a sort of problem-census of a random sample, or perhaps the whole population of active researchers in the field; ask them what kinds of rhetorical and communication questions they find most burning and most worthy of investigation; and then look at that inventory of questions to see how much agreement we could reach on how many of them involved communication situations that were obviously attempts at purposive influence or purposive communication, as opposed to situations that one might loosely call non-purposive. I sometimes wonder if the whole argument isn't a tempest in a teapot, since I think most of the questions we do research and most of the things we consider central to our research efforts involve questions with a dimension of purposive

(I'll get away from the term "intent" for a moment and say "purposive") human interaction. Now if, in fact, we found that a significant number of researchers in the field are positing questions which appear to involve events that might be called non-purposive or non-intentional, maybe this would enable us to get back to your original query of how much lack of consensus there really is when we get down to the operational basis of doing research or conducting inquiries.

Ted Clevenger: Gerry, it seems to me, that in conducting that exercise, we might very well insert an unfortunate bias on the outcome. I think that the comment with which you began is very true. I think that most of the research that we are engaged in now, most of the theory worked with, most of the prescriptive advice that we try to give people in our undergraduate performance oriented courses, is advised in theory and research that is concerned with purposive acts of communication--purposive on the part of the communication source. But, I think the underlying question is whether there may not be a continuity of principle between that kind of question and a whole different family of questions which perhaps we raise too rarely, that have to do with non-intentional communication events, if your definition will allow that to happen.

Frank Dance: I'm not exactly sure what you've said. Would you clarify?

Ted Clevenger: Yes, what I'm suggesting is that we may be doing ourselves a disservice by looking at only half the picture. For example: you are familiar, Frank, with the work that Ray Birdwhistell[4] has been doing in kinesics. And it's quite obvious that something that you

might call communication that seems to have a lot to do in terms of basic, elementary principles with verbal communication, goes on by means of nonverbal cues between people--postures, gestures, touches, positions and movements of the body, questions of muscle tensions, and so forth. A good deal of interpersonal influence does appear to occur through these channels. I suspect, if we take Birdwhistell's work at face value, much of this is unintentional communication on the part of the source. He doesn't know the message that he is transmitting.

Frank Dance: Certainly unconscious.

Ted Clevenger: Unconscious. Okay, now what distinction do you make between unconscious and unintentional?

Frank Dance: I guess I didn't have in mind by that intrusion making a distinction as much as--it seems to me you can have what we would recognize as conscious intent; but does all intent have to be conscious?

Ted Clevenger: Ah, ah, the psychiatric viewpoint emerges.

Frank Dance: Which is what Birdwhistell was into.

Ted Clevenger: Yes, yes, you're quite right.

Frank Dance: Sub-conscious intentionality. And I'm not sure that is a meaningful concept even, Ted.

Ted Clevenger: But my point is: that if we focus just on kinds of messages that a person consciously attempts to transmit to someone else, if we restrict our attentions, we may be seeing with only one eye, and we may be depriving ourselves of the stereoptic vision that could result from looking at some of these unconscious, or, if you're

willing to allow them to be called that, unintentional acts of communication, as only represented by nonverbal communication. There may be a whole family of things here that we have not really explored.

Gerry Miller: I don't disagree with Ted or Frank on the value of investigating such areas as kinesics, proxemics, and all kinds of paralinguistic communication codes. I do have the feeling, however, that as a communication scholar, my primary interest in those paralinguistic codes has to do with the ways they relate to, and affect the outcomes of communicative transactions. To put it differently, I suppose that many of the kinds of findings that Ted has mentioned (those of Bridwhistell, for instance) have an impact on the individual's outcomes when he attempts to communicate with another human being. I guess the thing that worries me is that if you look at these findings as ends in themselves, we could talk about the fact that a particular tie of a particular color might communicate certain things--it could cause someone to respond in certain ways. From there, it's a small jump into very broad realms of prestige suggestion and even general stimulus-response psychology which could cause us to argue that any object associated with the human being or any of his physical acts can be communicative stimuli that will cause certain behaviors on the part of other people. It seems to me, though, that when we argue this way, we're defining our discipline so broadly that we encompass just about everything in the world. I guess what I'm saying, Ted, is that while I would tend to agree with the value of studying a lot of these things, I would like to see us conceptually tie them into the linguistic codes

that we use in trying to communicate with one another and to study their relationships, places where they conflict, and the effects of conflicts of the two kinds of code systems. So perhaps I'm agreeing with you (I know I am) but with some reservations.

Ted Clevenger: Well, Gerry, I think I'm agreeing with your reservations as I listen to them. It seems to me, if we lose our focus as a field (I won't call it a discipline, but as a field) on conscious, intentional, verbal communication, I think that we have sold a part of our soul as a field, and our fortunes will rapidly decline. So I think I agree with your reservation, that these things cannot, at least for us, be an entirely separate and self-sustaining pattern of interest in themselves. They must be tied into the kind of thing that you describe as the center of the discipline.

Frank Dance: I'm thinking how fruitful Wayne Brockriede's early comments and the contributions have been in terms of thrust of the development of the conversation. For instance, his comment about communication and speech communication and Ted's recent remark about the focus of the field on verbal communication. Wayne and I haven't discussed this before (I don't really know his feelings on it), so I'm responding just to his earlier surface comment. I think that we have to maintain our focus too, and although I find in the brochure myself identified as a communication theorist, I would frankly admit to being more comfortable being called a speech communication theorist. Communication is a more extensive concept and shield than is speech communication, and I disagree that speech communication will eventuate into just communication. At least I hope this doesn't happen. I hope we always have a distinction, for I think

there are many forms of communication of which the most human form is speech communication, but I don't want to sacrifice animal communication and other forms of modalities to just the generic term communication. I was wondering what the other participants feel about this question: communication or speech communication?

Wayne Brockriede: I'd like to respond to that, Frank. It seems to me that there are several levels on which one could look at theory, one of which could be as a kind of a corporate, unified theory in which a profession defines the things similarly and cooperatively pursued. Another would be a kind of theoretical perspective in which some people might want to focus on speech communication, some people might want to focus in other ways. It seems to me that your own book[5] is a good argument in favor of a plural perspective, that one can look at communication from a variety of vantage points and make useful contributions to other people who are looking at it from a somewhat different point of view. So I'm not sure that we need to agree that we are all going to focus on precisely the same definition and develop precisely the same model, that there may be some utility (as I think you put it in your book) of looking with one eye on one thing and with the other eye on something else.

Frank Dance: Makes you look pretty funny, though.

Wayne Brockriede: Well, this is true. I think that "funny-lookingness" is one of the risks that a researcher and a theorist has to take. It would occur to me that ultimately in the development of any kind of corporate, unified theory, all of us need all the help we can get from

whatever perspective that focuses on somewhat different phenomena.

Gerry Miller: I'd like to make a couple of comments in response to Frank's position. One of the reasons I'm a little hesitant about divorcing speech communication from the more generic communication is that I have a feeling (if I may be prophetic for a moment) that much of the theoretical development we're going to see in the next five or ten years (particularly from some of the bright young people coming into the field) will be in the area of general systems theory. A lot of researchers are getting very interested in the applications of general systems theory as a possible unifying theoretical scheme for embracing communication phenomenon. To some extent, I think if the theoretical development moves in that direction (and only time will tell, I realize that), it will become pretty artificial to talk about the distinction between communication by oral means as opposed to some other modality or medium. The other reason I respond somewhat hesitantly, although not totally negatively, Frank, is that I've always been a little suspicious of the cleavages which have occurred at universities where they have tried to divide up the communication pie on the basis of the modality or the medium by which it is presented. I have sometimes said, somewhat facetiously, that if the book were invented today, we would have departments of books in all the universities by tomorrow. I think we have fractionated by means of medium or modality to the extent that it may not be the most useful way of dividing up the communication pie. I understand your argument, and I think there is a good rationale for it, so I'm just presenting some views which may conflict with it.

Ted Clevenger: It seems to me that Frank is merely carrying your rationale a step further. I think that in doing so he has kind of defined how far you are willing to go with that idea. Seems to me he's carried the idea of limiting your domain a step further. Now I know your argument with me is that it is an artificial step to take, but it, nevertheless, does limit to some extent, doesn't it, Gerry?

Gerry Miller: Yes, it does. I agree that it does cut off a little more of the pie or give you a little more central focus.

Frank Dance: I think everyone is being so darn rational tonight that it is going to be difficult to get any fight going at all. I couldn't possibly disagree with Wayne's position, since I agree with him completely that the field of communication includes other than speech communication, speech communication being a part of the total field; therefore, I am extremely interested in seeing people with interests other than my focus (speech communication) make observations about the total field, because I'm sure those observations will help me place my interests within a grander framework. The same thing I think Gerry is alluding to in pointing out about general systems theory. Now, I guess a point of distinction is, I do not consider the spoken word as primus inter pares, as the first among equals, or in any way equal with other modalities of communication. I think that my reading, my understanding of some of the research done by people like Alexander Romonavich Luria[6], or Vygotsky[7]--this line of investigation and research--suggests a centrality of the spoken word, a priority beyond primacy of genesis, a centrality in human communication that is distinct in kind, rather than in quantity, in quality rather than in quantity from written communication or gestural communication, or any of the other modalities of communication. This is part of the reason why I feel that

there is, within the great field of communication, lots and lots of room for meaningful research in a specifically human area called speech communication.

Ted Clevenger: Yes, Frank. Now let me ask a question. Isn't television at least as human as speech? You know, it's a human invention, after all.

Frank Dance: Well, I think television is a medium for the extension of speech communication, Ted. It's an extension of man rather than an essential or qualitative difference between man and other things. I don't think man invented speech, for instance. The kind of thing Lenneberg[8] suggests, I think, (I may not read him right) that speech or spoken communication is generic, is species specific.

Ted Clevenger: Well, don't Lenneberg's concepts imply that man invented speech at the same time speech was inventing man?

Frank Dance: He may well say that Ted; I'm not going one way or the other into that one. I'm not sure where we can go with what he said because he said it both ways. It's almost Engelian--the idea that the hand shaped man while man shaped the hand and the tools. Isn't that about where you are with that?

Ted Clevenger: Yes, that's quite right.

Frank Dance: But I don't feel the same way about television.

Ted Clevenger: Oh, I see what you mean.

Gerry Miller: Frank, I want to express one reservation to both you and Ted. Obviously, we are all creatures of our environment, and I'm reacting to the milieu of my department here at Michigan State in the same way that each of you is reacting to your own departmental milieu. We have people at Michigan State, for example a Bradley Greenberg, or a Pete Troldahl, who came out of mass communication. They're interested in many of the same

communication variables that I'm interested in. Now we might design the same kind of study to look at the same variables. To take a very simple-minded illustration, we might become interested in some question of how source credibility affects response to a persuasive message. My guess is that the first thing Greenberg and Troldahl would think of when they were operationalizing the message would be to put it in a newspaper format or on a piece of mimeograph paper and run it off and have people read it, whereas my own predeliction might well be to tape record it or to have somebody present it in the oral mode. The interesting thing is that very frequently when this happens, and it has happened a couple of times, you get about the same results. To put it differently, you find that the variable you are interested in seems to have about the same impact whether the subject read the message from the newspaper or heard someone presenting it. So, what I've been trying to say is that while I think there are differences in modes of presentation (and we ought to look at those channel and message variables), there are also a lot of variables that function similarly regardless of whether the message is read or presented orally. I guess this is one of the reasons I feel somewhat reluctant to make these separations, even though I do agree that there are probably differences. I do think that the way Frank's talking about it, it could be argued that the oral mode may be more central to human communication, given the strain of research that he mentioned.

Ted Clevenger: Gerry, I'd like to respond to that. It seems to me that what you said represents an extremely valid and useful insight if we recognize where its limits are. Let's try this one on for size and see what you think about it. I would argue that in most instances, except for peculiar circumstances, if the variable is present at all in a given

modality, it will have about the same effect there as it has in other modalities. The trick and the differences between these media is that sometimes variables that are present in one are not at all present in the other, because of qualitative differences between them. Thus, for example, television is really, Frank, (if you'll allow me to disagree a little here) more than just an extension of the speech mode, and at the same time it's less. For example, Frank, there are no instantaneous feedback mechanisms present in the television mode, but by the same token there is a vast sociology in the television mode that just has no opportunity to operate in a personal situation. So if the variable's present, I would agree with Gerry. I think the evidence indicates that, by and large, it has the same influence regardless of modality. But there are some interesting differences in these modalities, I think.

Gerry Miller: I would tend to agree with that, Ted.

Dr. Charles Wise: [A question from a Texas Tech University faculty member interjected.] I think we are following the level of your path fairly closely and consequently I'm afraid I may interrupt it just a bit, but I'd like to ask a traditional question about feedback. In the discussion of possible differences or similarities among rhetorical theory or between rhetorical theory and communication theory, the traditional (shall I say layman's) way of distinguishing among them has been in terms of the situation studied and the method employed. Have we reached a stage now where those things, neither of them, are no longer of concern to people in speech communication?

Wayne Brockriede: I think if we haven't reached it, we're moving in that direction. We're beginning, some of us, at least, to look at the rhetorical impulse in a good many formats and situations other than public speaking or indeed oral discourse as well. I think when we do, as we

expand a definition of rhetoric, we are, as I indicated earlier, coming very close to a point where it becomes virtually synonymous. Now some people make the distinction of dividing communication into rhetorical, scientific and aesthetic kinds of transaction, and I suppose I have no problem with that as long as it be made very clear that these are not discrete categories. Any discourse that could be labeled under one of the three labels has to have elements of the other two and I'm not sure that that kind of distinction is ultimately especially useful.

Ted Clevenger: I think if I understand correctly what you said, I think I agree with it. I wonder, however, if there may not be an extremely important thing going on in the field. I don't know how long ago it was, Wayne, but I think you and Gerry Miller and Frank Dance were all present at a meeting which was billed as a debate between David Berlo on one hand, and I believe it was--

Gerry Miller: Kenneth Hance. It was in Cleveland in 1962.[9]

Ted Clevenger: David prefaced his remarks by saying, "This is about the fourth meeting of this type that I've participated in, and I hope it will be the last one the association schedules." Now I think he was a little ahead of his time, but I think he was reflecting a view that many of us have since come to feel. The key question is not what tools you like to use, but rather what kind of a structure it is you like to build. I think that one of the things that has happened is that we have had communication theorists who are of the more humanistic bent than the kind that we had back in the day before David made that statement. We've also had rhetorical theorists (people who use that name to describe themselves) who really were something more than antiquarian. They weren't just digging out and explicating another old manuscript that somebody had written long ago. We have

rhetoricians now who are writing theory today in the same way the communication theorist would try to write theory today. So I think we have had not so much a moving together as an overlapping of the types of activities that go on with regard to the theory in the field, and this has made (now that we have some theoretical interests that are relatively common) the whole question of methodology much less interesting than it used to be.

Wayne Brockriede: Yes, I think so too, Ted. I think the real question of whether there is a difference is, if we were to address ourselves to some questions about theory and research, whether they would be equally applicable to the interests of people who call themselves communication theorists and those who call themselves rhetorical theorists, then my hypothesis would be that they would be. I can't imagine anything that a person with either of the labels might say that would be a sensible argument about the kinds of behaviors we're interested in that wouldn't be as useful to a person with one label as someone with the other.

Gerry Miller: Let me disagree with that, Wayne. I concur wholeheartedly that the notion of trying to cut up the pie between the rhetorical critic and the communication scientist on the basis of methodology is a useless and antiquated approach. I still have the feeling, however, that one can differentiate on the basis of the purposes for which inquiry is conducted. You recall, John, and the rest of you who were there when my tape[10] was played, that I said the purpose of the communication scientist is to develop propositions containing empirical content which have truth value outside of the situations in which the observations themselves were made. This implies that the communication scientist seeks to develop some kinds of generalizations or general laws about the way certain kinds of communication variables will function in a wide variety of contexts. On

the other hand, I think of two purposes that a rhetorical critic might have which would not fit this particular paradigm. One would be the sort of thing Wayne mentioned when he alluded to aesthetic questions, and I would also add ethical questions. Thus, a rhetorical critic might not be at all concerned with any kinds of behavioral outcomes or any kinds of generalizations about behavior but instead with making judgments about the ethical desirability of a communication act or its aesthetic qualities. I think that's a different kind of purpose than the scientist has in mind.

Wayne Brockriede: It may be different in emphasis, Gerry, but it occurs to me that the critic who has as his primary purpose a pronouncement from a frame of reference of ethics or aesthetics, if the interpretation is at all sensible, will have, if not overt, explicit generalizability, at least potential generalizability, or it can't be very interesting.

Gerry Miller: Yes, this may be so. I guess I would argue that the criteria for the evidence on which one bases the generalization differ, as well as the publicness and reproduceability of the methods and results. The other purpose that the rhetorical critic may have is to study some set of relatively unique events that are of enough social consequence that they should be carefully analyzed. He may point out, for example, that the speaking of an Abraham Lincoln or a Franklin Roosevelt had such tremendous social consequences and such a tremendous social impact that he wishes to investigate what made these men effective speakers without any real concern as to whether or not the kinds of findings he can discover will generalize to the discourse of the average communicator. I think very often we realize that when looking at this kind of communication, we're looking not at re-occurring events, but at a set of events that were quite unique in history but were still of significant social consequence

to merit examination.

Wayne Brockriede: Well, they might not generalize, Gerry, to the ordinary communicator, but if they don't generalize to charismatic leaders, if we can't learn anything from a study of Roosevelt or Lincoln that will shed some light on explaining and predicting communication behavior, then I'm not sure there is very much value in making judgments about the single event.

Frank Dance: You know, Wayne, if you hadn't talked right then, I wasn't sure whether that was Gerry who talked just before you or you, because I'm beginning to hear one voice again. This is Frank, just so that those listening know that the voice has different names. One way that I interpret what Gerry said was that science can be used for the purpose of generalization, or that science can be used for the validation of historical incident--for the examination of the historicity of an incident. . . I could scientifically investigate through autopsy. . . the death of a specific person, which may or may not have a great deal of generalization, but it was a scientific, methodological approach to ascertaining the cause of death, or I could scientifically examine the communicative setting and the communicative output for the purpose of generalizing beyond it. I don't think science as a method (or any method) always leads to generalization or is peculiarly suited to the validation of history. . . I'm not sure that there is an ounce of disagreement among us on that. Is there?

Wayne Brockriede: I'm not sure that there is, either. We may be talking about different points of emphasis. I guess the only thing that I'm arguing is that the study of a unique event that doesn't get into an analysis of what happened, in a way that may make the interpretation

generalizable along some dimensions of at least one other similar event, I guess I'm just not very much interested in that kind of criticism. The critic's primary function may be to say something insightful about the individual event, and the scientist's primary function may be to develop a dependable generalization. It seems to me that, unless there is something of the other's purpose in both kinds of research, something is lacking.

Gerry Miller: I'll just react briefly to your question. I think you have to distinguish between the use of some set of methods that has come to be labeled "scientific methods" (and I know that even these are pretty broad in scope), and what I perceive to be the purpose of doing scientific inquiry. It seems to me that the coroner, when he conducts an autopsy on a particular corpse, is not functioning as a scientist since he isn't interested in making generalizations about the biochemical composition of that corpse--corpus--(that's a bad pun, I guess), to a group of other corpses. Rather, he is interested in telling you why this particular man met his death. Now by the same token, I think a rhetorical critic could do a very rigorous content analysis, or even a computer analysis, of the style of Franklin Roosevelt without being at all concerned whether the characteristics of Roosevelt's style will generalize to anyone else. He is only interested in Roosevelt's style. But if you or I, or Ted, or Wayne did a content analysis or a computer analysis of the oral style of a randomly selected group of twenty college students, I presume we would be doing that for the purpose of making generalizations to some broader population and arriving at some low order statements about the way college undergraduates in general tend to encode or to put together messages on certain dimensions. That's really the distinction I was trying to make in terms of purpose, not as in terms of the method employed.

Ted Clevenger: Gerry, I like that distinction very much. I would like to suggest, however, or I guess what I want to say is, I want to re-emphasize a point that I made earlier, that I think somehow or other that it's incongruous in that framework that you just laid out. It's the truth that doesn't quite fit the model, and hence, I think, suggests a need to rethink our whole position as a discipline, perhaps even as a set of social scientists on these questions. I see rhetorical theorists writing theory today for the first time in I don't know how many years. I see people actually inventing rhetorical theory. Now these are people whose predominate method of published research is rhetorical criticism. And, Wayne, I guess we have to rely on you here for some help, but it seems to me that one of the things a rhetorical critic does everytime he performs a criticism, is to test certain concepts, at least images from rhetorical theory to see if they will help him explain that case. And to that extent, isn't he testing generalizations, in a sense?

Wayne Brockriede: Yes, I think so, Ted. It seems to me that Larry Rosenfield[11] several years ago made a useful distinction between an analog-modality and a model-modality, but making the point all the while that criticism was necessarily comparative, that one either compares it with some other species, some other similar event, or he holds up against it some model and sees the extent to which it fits that model. For example, if one tries to analyze a communication event and found that the model he was using didn't account for what seems manifestly to have occurred in that situation, he would then raise some questions, however speculatively, about the adequacy of that model. Now, he might not try to test that in more rigorous ways, but at least he is generating some hypotheses that he or someone else may test. I guess the principle that I'm arguing for is

not that criticism yields generalization, but that, if it doesn't have the potentiality as far as stimulating some generalization, that it is of lesser quality, that the failure to do so amounts to a mere description or classification, of which in the past we've had a good many that don't really get into the job of analysis of what happened in that single event. In order to do that, you've almost got to involve yourself in some sort of comparison.

Ted Clevenger: Yes, I think, Wayne, that that kind of cookie cutter figure study that you just described, that doesn't go anywhere, is the sort of thing that very early in our graduate careers turned Gerry and me away from rhetorical studies and rhetorical criticisms and toward quantitative and experimental methods. What you're suggesting is that you can put a thousand of those studies end to end and you still don't have anything that's worth saying, that's any different than what you started out with. But that's not the necessary mode of rhetorical criticism. Now I'm just wondering, Gerry, what the implication of all this is for the point on which we originally had some little disagreement. I'm thinking about the point that the difference between the methods of rhetoric and the methods of communication research is that the one yields observations and evaluations while the other yields generalization.

Gerry Miller: I guess I'm back where I was thirty minutes ago when I asked Wayne, if in fact there is a communion of methodology and purpose between all of these various labels we struggle under, what is the point of maintaining them all in the vocabulary. I guess I've always labored under the assumption that if we're going to have "rhetorical theorists" and "communication scientists" and talk about having both kinds of animals

in our group, then there must be something to distinguish them. Consequently, if I grant that it is very difficult to identify any distinguishing characteristics, I'm back to the position of saying, in the interest of having an economical vocabulary, that it makes the best intellectual sense to find one set of labels and use them. Now I do understand the pragmatic political argument that says someday this may happen, but at the present point of development it's not politically desirable or politically feasible to proceed in this direction.

Ted Clevenger: I'd like to raise another question of Wayne. We seem to be relying on you as our source expert a good deal, but I'd like to hear some interaction between you and Frank Dance, who has worked a good deal in the theories of the Russian cognitive psychologists, as to the significance of some of the newly emerging concepts in rhetoric, particularly with regard to invention, for the eventual merging of these two branches of activities, that is, rhetoric on the one hand and communication theory on the other, I'm thinking of the developments which seemed to me at least to suggest that where, as rhetoricians, rhetorical theorists are turning back to somewhat more emphasis on invention than they have in the past, and are discovering, it seems to me, some interesting points of similarities between that branch of rhetoric and cognitive psychology. Now what does that mean for the future of our discipline?

Frank Dance: I guess I'd start off, Ted, by saying that I have always been discomforted and not supportive of the distinction between communication theory and rhetorical theory. I think it is an artificial

distinction. I don't mean that I don't think that there are differences, but I don't think there are any reasons for hositlity. The kind of carping which has appeared in some of our journal articles and in some of our convention presentations, I think, is basically in error. I don't think communication theory and rhetorical theory either in essence or in practice are at all incompatible, but rather are complementary, and I think that is exactly the direction that the cognitive theorists in the Soviet tradition and that the current rhetorical theoreticians are going, and I think it's the direction in which we will eventuate, to use Wayne's earlier words.

Wayne Brockriede: Yes, I quite agree, Frank. It seems to me that Gerry is very right in thinking that the vocabulary has encouraged the separation. If we have one group of people turning out work on ideas like topoi and stasis and ethos, pathos, and logos, and we have other people talking about attitude theory and cognitive consistency, without recognizing that they are dealing with somewhat similar things, then all of us are potentially impoverished. It may well be that those of us who have come up under the rhetorical tradition need to modernize our vocabulary and to use a language which will be more useful if only because some of the most insightful work is being done by people who use the newer vocabulary, and I think for this reason to try to refurbish the classical language may be a strategic error.

John Deethardt: I'd like to ask a question and I'd like to couch it in terms of the usefulness of communication and rhetorical theory for given purposes. You'll recognize the Eric Larrabee orientation; reliable

in its usefulness for a given purpose. What are the functions or purposes of rhetorical theory as opposed to communication theory? For instance, is communication theory more applicable to the analyzation of communication breakdown and rhetorical theory more useful in the classroom application to improve the skills of undergraduates?

Wayne Brockriede: I think that that's been a traditional distinction. I think that there are a fair number of people who bear the label rhetoricians who no longer have the emphasis they once had either on public speaking or on the development of skills, but are interested in understanding the behavior of human communication. I'm not sure that that distinction really gets us very far. I think that Ted's earlier comment that rhetorical people are becoming more interested in theory and that communication scholars are becoming more humanistic again brings us closer to the center of overlap. The rhetorical theorist who has long thought himself a humanist, I think, would want to place a good deal of emphasis on the people who are interacting in a transaction but so would most of the communication theorists that I know of. It occurs to me that the purposes of both are to help us to understand and predict on a general basis and to analyze and evaluate on an individual basis the kinds of communication experiences that people are involved in.

Ted Clevenger: I'd agree with that, and Frank, I wonder if you don't have something to say about the utility of communication theory in developing basic communication skills.

Frank Dance: Ted, it seems to me we are almost coming full circle again to the distinction, if there is any, between rhetoric and communication, between speech communication and communication in general.

There is no distinction between theory and practice that is a viable distinction in practice. It seems to me that any good practice is a manifestation of good theory. And good theory should lead, if understood theoretically, to the development of good practice. I think this is exactly to what you are alluding. Is that true, Ted?

Ted Clevenger: Yes, it is.

Frank Dance: It seems to me that any theory should lead to the capacity to predict and control behavior. This is much along the lines that Gerry was discussing earlier. Good communication theory, speech communication theory, should help one in the practice of his speech communication behavior.

Ted Clevenger: Well, it just seemed to me, looking back over the relatively few years that I've been in this business, that your books and your courses were among the first to introduce, Frank, what was then radical communication theory, into the kind of course and the kind of textbook that would represent courses given to freshmen and sophomores at colleges and universities to develop their communication skills. Isn't that right?

Frank Dance: I would like to think so, Ted.

Ted Clevenger: The first part I won't ask you to comment on, but it is true that that kind of influence has infused your work, and I think it's interesting that every time we want to talk about these two things as separates you keep reminding us that you don't really like to make that distinction.

Frank Dance: It's only a useful distinction in terms of concentration of energies. I don't think it's at all a useful distinction in terms of methodology, in terms of professional orientation, in terms of human beings, in terms of learning, in terms of activity.

ENDNOTES

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4. Ray L. Birdwhistell, Kinesics and Context: Essays on Body Motion Communication,» (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1970).

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6. Alexander R. Luria, The Role of Speech in the Regulation of Normal and Abnormal Behavior (New York: Liveright, 1961).

7. L. S. Vygotsky, Thought and Language (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1962).

8. Eric H. Lenneberg, Biological Foundations of Language (New York: John Wiley, 1967).

9. Program presented at the 48th Annual Convention of the Speech Association of America (now the Speech Communcation Association), Cleveland, December, 1962.

10. Speech Communication as a Behavioral Science, videotape. Program number three, Foreword.

11. Lawrence W. Rosenfield, "The Anatomy of Critical Discourse", Speech Monographs, 25 (March, 1968), 50-69.

UP-DATING REACTION OF FRANK DANCE

The one response I have to make deals with a content area touched upon early in the paper--in fact from the very outset.

The question of intentionality is one which is gaining in importance with each passing day. In the discussion appearing early in the transcript I mention Miller's comments on intentionality in communication and things go on from there.

It has become evident to me that all too often when we speak of intent we are speaking solely of the presence or absence of intent on the level of interpersonal communication, of intent between a sender and a receiver, a speaker and a listener. What needs to be made clear is that intent can be studied on a number of levels and that the crucial level for definitional purposes may be the intrapersonal rather than the interpersonal level of speech communication. In other words, does the speaker, or speech communicator intend his message in terms of internal construction and utterance? Is the speech act intentional? MacKay in his essay in the recent book Non-Verbal Communication edited by Hinde does an excellent job of setting out some parameters for the consideration of intent, as does Langer in her two volume work Mind: Essay on Human Feeling. In retrospect I have the feeling that Miller is discussing intent on the interpersonal level; if so, then I will hold to my earlier position that intent is not absolutely essential to defining speech communication on the level of interpersonal communication--however, I do believe that an impressive argument can be made for the essentiality of intent on the intrapersonal level of speech communication. Perhaps the study of solipsisms offers one approach to the study of intrapersonal speech communication intent.

The study of the acquisition of a form of human language by non-human primates also highlights the need for a careful and penetrating study of intent in speech communication.

REFLECTIONS ON A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH FRIENDS

Gerald R. Miller

Since I subscribe to the old saw that hindsight is usually better than foresight, I expect to react with amazement or distress when forced to confront my pronouncements of the past. Consequently, it was somewhat disconcerting to discover, after reviewing our telephone conversation of almost three years ago, that I still believe most of the things I said. The optimistic interpretation is that my remarks had at least some merit; the pessimistic view is that I am growing increasingly dogmatic with advancing age. Hopefully, the more charitable interpretation has at least some merit.

In our original discussion, we spent considerable time on the issue of whether or not intent is a useful defining characteristic of the term communication. My reason for supporting its utility was primarily grounded in a disciplinary pragmatism: I think a notion such as intent permits us to identify those human activities that should comprise the central intellectual concerns of communication scholars. Today, this same need for keeping our scholarly wits about us exists, lest we spread our resources too thin or attempt to become arbiters of all the world's scholarly and social questions. Undoubtedly there are other ways of achieving this needed focus, but I still feel that the criterion of intent (as measured by the intersubjective agreement of observers) ensures that we will not confuse the central with the peripheral.

Along this same line, I presented a colloquium at the University of Denver several weeks ago and was pleased to discover that one of my chief Bell System adversaries, Frank Dance, has swung partially around to my

way of thinking on the intent issue. Frank now believes that intent is a legitimate criterial attribute when deciding whether or not to label certain primate behaviors as communication behaviors. Certainly, I relish these small victories: today the chimpanzee; tomorrow the world!

Likewise, I am still convinced of the utility of attempting to distinguish among the types of questions that scholars can ask about human communication. Like the rest of the original discussants, I believe it is fruitless to base distinctions among various approaches to inquiry on methodological grounds. Rather, as my remarks in a recent paper indicate, I believe the distinctions, which I take as necessary for coordination of scholarly activities, should be grounded in the reasons for pursuing communication inquiry. Speaking of the futility of past analytic attempts to differentiate species of scholarship, I asserted:

> To say that previous distinctions have proved largely trivial distractions in no way negates the value of making useful distinctions between various approaches to inquiry. What presently worries me is that in our zeal to atone for past mistakes, we will totally foresake careful analysis of just what we are about; and as a result, forfeit the intellectual gains that may result from such careful analysis. Certainly, the signs of this analytic disenchantment are in the air. If I were to seek a shorthand label to describe the current attitude of members of this Association /the Speech Communication Association/ toward communication inquiry, I would probably settle for the phrase, "one big, happy family." A mindless blending mentality seems to pervade our intellectual and professional transactions, with proposals aimed at more crisply delineating our various scholarly enterprises indicted as threats to some newly discovered scholarly unity. Thus, a relatively modest proposal from the Research Board that sought to provide greater scholarly focus for our professional journals was recently greeted by many as a subversive attempt to undermine the intellectual integrity of the Association. In a similar vein, our new divisional structure, which many, including myself, had hoped would clarify the central scholarly foci of the Association,

contains several amorphous marriages that are, at best, conceptually hazy. Indeed, the prevailing message seems to be: since we are all in the business of studying human communication, distinctions between various approaches to inquiry be damned!

For my money, this position is as misguided as our prior dabbling in superficial debate. Distinctions between various approaches to inquiry are useful and important, not because they demonstrate that one approach is inherently better than the others, but because they illustrate the complexity of the phenomenon we seek to understand and illuminate the various kinds of questions we can ask about that phenomenon. Stated differently, researchers are guided by different purposes when they ask questions about human communication, and it is this variability in purposive question-asking that best distinguishes humanistic and scientific approaches to communication inquiry, not scholarly quibbles over methodological niceties.

...I want to state explicitly the two reasons why I believe previous efforts to delineate differences in various approaches to inquiry have met with failure. First, rather than being dominated by a sincere desire to clarify our scholarly divisions of labor, these efforts were largely politically motivated and sought primarily to establish the hegemony of a particular view of inquiry. Second, and perhaps even more important, most of the emphasis in prior dialogues about approaches to inquiry has been placed on metholological matters. As I have already indicated, I believe that this is a misguided, erroneous way to deal with the problem; in fact, as my remarks proceed, it will become obvious that the humanist and scientist can often profitably employ the same method to deal with the questions that interest them. Thus, the key distinction lies not in methodology but in motive for inquiry.[1]

Moving on to yet another question about the defining characteristics of communication inquiry, I remain opposed to distinctions based on medium or modality; specifically, I do not think we gain much intellectually (though now as then, it may be a politically expedient move) from trying to differentiate "speech communication" from the more generic "communication." At the time of our original conversation, I pointed to the

possibility of increased interest in system theory analyses of human communication as one trend underscoring the relative unimportance of the modality distinction. I am pleased to report that this trend is accelerating. More and more research is couched in the language of cybernetic systems; structural functionalism, and general systems theory, a fact I can attest to in my role as maiden editor of the new journal, Human Communication Research. Moreover, researchers have moved beyond superficial translation of scholarly problems into a systems argot and have begun to grapple with questions dealing with the logical and empirical requirements of various systems paradigms and to apply such methodologies as multivariate analysis, path analysis, and multi-dimensional scaling to their research efforts. If our goal is understanding of the effects of communication within particular systems, we must attend to the total message flow within the system, not restrict ourselves to written memoranda, on the one hand, or spoken exchanges, on the other.

So this is where I stand today on several of the issues that we bandied about by phone on an April evening, nearly three years ago. Two things are clear to me. First, I have no omniscient powers; thus, the conclusions I reach today may be drastically altered by the events of tomorrow. Second, the field of communication (or speech communication, if you prefer) will not rise or fall on the speculations of Brockreide, Clevenger, Dance, or Miller, well-considered as those speculations may be. Rather, it will continue to prosper and grow to the extent that research by young, emerging scholars reflects greater conceptual and methodological ingenuity and sophistication. As I look around me, I

find cause for much optimism; in my envious moments, I wish that I possessed some of the knowledge and skills with which many of our fledgling Ph.D.'s are armed. The future of the field rests in good hands.

East Lansing, Michigan
March 19, 1974

Notes

1. "Humanistic and Scientific Approaches to Communication Inquiry: Rivalry or Rapprochment." Paper delivered at the 59th Annual Convention of the Speech Communication Association, New York, November, 1973.

A REACTION TO "THE RELATIONS AMONG RHETORICAL THEORY, COMMUNICATION THEORY AND RESEARCH"

William J. Jordan

An operative concept in office management asserts that the usefulness of a memorandum is an inverse function of the length of time elapsed before the message if filed. That is to say the longer one waits to file a particular report, the greater the likelihood that there will never be any real necessity to file it at all; the option is to discard the report and get on with the business at hand. Such a decision is at the very heart of producing a reaction to the conference discussion presented in the preceding pages. In developing a reaction to this commentary on the state of the discipline four years after the act, my major criterion has been simply what statements survive as meaningful to the speech communication student of 1975 and beyond?

My essential bias in approaching this task is the same as that voiced by Brockriede in his opening comment: "If you define it [rhetoric] as a study of how interpersonal relationships and attitudes are influenced with the context of the communicative situation, then I'm not sure how it differs from communication theory." The failure of this conference to identify important differences coupled with the increasing emphases of subsequent researches on the study of interpersonal relationships and contextual influences in the communication situation, argues strongly for the thesis that rhetorical theory and communication theory are synonomous terms within the discipline of speech communication, and further, that the surface differences which may be identified are merely differences in terminology rather than differences in substance, methodology or focus.

To support this thesis, this paper proceeds by examining the failures of the conference to identify important differences between rhetorical theory and communication theory. Within the conference, three sources of potential difference were examined. These were "intentionality in communication behavior," "limits of each area of the discipline," and methodologies employed."

Intentionality in Communication Behavior

In explicating the discussion of the first source of potential difference, it is tempting to recall Watson's early effort to cleanse the temples of psychology of the "ghosts" which were constantly being studied and debated even though their presence was never verified. Intention appears to be one of the ghosts in speech communication. I refer to intentionality as a ghost primarily because no one seems able to identify either its form or function.

Consider function. Dance asserts that intention is essential to rhetoric but not communication. Clevenger concurs, while Brockriede, the only one in the group probably willing to be labelled a rhetorician, argues that it may be the least important element in any given rhetorical situation. Miller, apparently the only member of the group to claim intentionality, does so in two rather strange ways. First, he sees it as a function of both communicative and rhetorical acts, a non-distinct characteristic for purposes of the discussion. Second, he describes the function of intention not as a factor of some influence in the communication process, but as something which helps him to define what it is that he is studying. As such, intentionality appears an a priori variable.

When the four speakers attempt to operationalize the variable of intentionality they reach the point of discussing behaviors which Dance

labels as "sub-conscious" and even "unconscious," such as kinesic and proxemic phenomena. When intentionality is identified as "sub-conscious" the ghost vanishes from the discussion and talk turns to the more specifically observable codes and modes of communication.

One message in this discussion of intention seems to state clearly that intentionality does not separate rhetorical theory from communication theory. If intentionality is that causative element so essential in twentieth century scientific thinking about human behavior, then perhaps concerns with intentionality may be really surrogates for the modern theoretician who thinks thus: 'if I study intentional behaviors I am in the respectable realm of science and my research has academic credibility. If I study unintentional behaviors, I am in the less respectable realm of human accidents or random events, and thus outside the realm of science.' However, as long as intentionality is not operationalized, scholars who define the discipline a priori as concerning only intentional acts are violating a first requirement of scientific discovery. Although random behaviors are not the stuff of behavioral science or rhetoric, random events may only be declared random after they have been observed and analyzed. A common goal then, which should unify rhetoric and communication theory, is the search for intentional behaviors in the human interaction. This is a very different point of view from the observer who closes his eyes to the communicative behaviors which he evaluates as interaction accidents or unintentional communicative behaviors prior to his analysis of those events.

Limits to the Discipline

The second area of potential difference in the discussion concerns the limits of the discipline. An interesting shift in terminology develops at

this point: rhetorical theory is now referred to as speech communication theory and the discussion proceeds by attempting to delimit the study of "oral" communication as a subset within the universe of communication.

Dance introduces the distinction between a macro concept 'communication' and a micro concept 'speech communication'. The major distinction developed in this interchange concerns the modality or medium of communication. All contributors appear to agree with Dance that the spoken modality is the primary and most significant mode of human communication and that the other modes, such as those in the mass media, are important extensions of human speech communication. This portion of the discussion seems to be a rather fruitless search for distinctions. The shift from rhetorical theory to speech communication theory perhaps may be somewhat of a Freudian slip which conveniently signals the homogeneity of the speakers' points of view.

In retrospect, the idea of attempting to distinguish speech communication from communication on the basis of modes or channels of communication will not yield many results so long as the speakers select modalities or channels which do not exclude speech signals. The context from which all four speakers work is essentially a speech channel context. Additional channels may be added to the context, but the speech channel is never removed, and no clear distinction is developed. Had an electrical engineer been speaking for communication theory, the question of modalities would probably have been dismissed as of lesser importance than the question of signal systems. Certainly, the electrical engineer might consider himself a communication theorist, but his distinguishing characteristic as a non-speech communication scholar would be his focus on the physical properties of signals, man made or otherwise. Clearly

all communication theory is not speech communication. Likewise all communication theory is not Clevenger-theory, Miller-theory, or Dance-theory. And in this instance, Clevenger-Miller-Dance-theory appears more akin to speech communication theory than all communication theory.

Methodologies Employed

The third distinction in search of substance relates to the research methodologies utilized by the rhetorician and the communication theorist. Miller appears to be the only participant arguing for a distinction. From his perspective, the communication theorist is attempting to construct valid generalizations about human communication while the rhetorician is not. Brockriede rather convincingly argues for the same goals within rhetorical theory, and Dance summarizes the discussion with the generalization that no real distinction exists.

A bit of historical perspective may help to clarify the issue. Certainly over the long period of history, rhetorical theory in the tradition of Aristotle and Campbell has been concerned with the development of useful generalizations applicable to the practice of communication. Prior to the 1950s the data base of rhetoric consisted of non-quantitative observations of communicative behaviors. From this base inferences and generalizations were developed. These data, inferences and generalizations, constituted what could be called the corpus of rhetorical theory.

With the development of behavioral psychology and psychometrics, researchers developed the tools for making generalizations based on quantitative data concerning human behavior. No one referred to these communication researchers intially as rhetoricians, although the term "experimental rhetorician" was momentarily applied to a few early

experimentalists concerned with rhetorical variables. Indeed, many established rhetoricians rejected the behavior-oriented researcher as a mechanist. Likewise, many behavioral scientists had little sympathy for the rhetorician who scorned scientific methods or who used "cookie cutter" approaches for analyzing communication acts. "Cookie cutter" approach was a popular term in the 1960s used to designate a research design which set out to analyze the invention, arrangement, style and delivery of a speaker and concluded that, indeed, the speaker's discourse had invention, arrangement, style and delivery. While university libraries are overloaded with theses and dissertations of this genre, the trend in serious research in rhetoric has been and continues to be oriented toward discovering generalizations concerning the effects of discourse.

Lest the behavioralists be too critical of the rhetoricians, scholars in the 1980s may well look upon the many studies of attitude change, for example, conducted in the 1950s and 60s and level similar "cookie cutter" attacks.

Unfortunately, research methodologies, like hair styles, are a matter of vogue. Students emulate the procedures of their esteemed professors. Their identity is not based upon their ability to generate new truth claims; rather it is based upon their particular methodology and the other people who use that methodology. Upon such an artificial basis, distinctions and stereotypes have been developed between rhetoricians and communication theorists. The preceeding conference is ample evidence of the validity of those stereotypes. When submitted to careful examination, the stereotypes vanish. Serious rhetoricians and communication theorists have the same goals: to discover how man communicates, and to improve human communication. Poor research will continue in all areas. But

that research should not define the discipline. Good research will also continue, and the good research will clarify commonalities between rhetoric and communication theory. Good research will be that research which is topic-truth oriented, rather than genre, method, professor or peer group oriented.

Conclusion

From an empirical perspective it may be well to conclude by questioning the worth of a conference of this nature. What is the value of the discussion if we are not able to reject the null hypothesis of no significant difference between rhetoric and communication theory? The primary value, as I see it, is in the removal of divisive artificial conflicts which are counter-productive in a community of scholars. A secondary value is the exposure of false distinctions which may carry weight merely because of the credibility of their source. From a historical perspective, rhetorical theory offers much to the study of human communication. Communication theory has much to add to the knowledge of human communication. A synthesis of knowledge approaches the goals of rhetoric and communication theory. If those goals are obtained by the year 2000, what does it matter if the academic ancestors were labelled rhetoricians or communication theorists?

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